

Message Text

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44

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 NEA-10 ISO-00 SAM-01 IO-10 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 EB-07 COME-00 AID-05 /097 W

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R 051300Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY MADRID

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2350

INFO AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

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TAGS: PINT, PFOR, SS, SP, US, UN

SUBJ: MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND TOURISM STATEMENTS ON
BASE NEGOTIATIONS, SAHARA, AND INTERNAL AFFAIRS

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. FOLLOWING COUNCIL OF MINISTERS MEETING
JULY 4 MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND TOURISM TOLD PRESS REPS
THAT GOS WAS NEGOTIATING WITH US FOR COMPLETELY NEW AGREEMENT
AND NOT RENEWAL OF AFC WITH SLIGHT CHANGES. MINISTER SAID THAT
IF FOUR-POWER TALKS ON SAHARA FAILED, THEN GOS WOULD SEEK NEW
FOUR-POWER TALKS UNDER AEGIS OF UN. FURTHER SAID GOS HAS
DECIDED TO REMOVE RESTRICTIONS ON PUBLICATION OF NEWS RE
DISTURBANCES IN BASQUE PROVINCES IN RESPONSE TO "UNANIMOUS
OUTCRY" FROM PRESS ASSOCIATIONS, AND THERE WOULD BE NO
EXCEPTIONAL POLITICAL ANNOUNCEMENTS JULY 18. END SUMMARY.

2. FOLLOWING WEEKLY COUNCIL OF MINISTERS MEETING JULY 4
MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND TOURISM, HERRERA ESTEBAN, HELD
CUSTOMARY PRESS CONFERENCE WITH PRESS REPS. HERRERA FIRST
ANNOUNCED THAT GOS HAD DECIDED TO REMOVE RESTRICTIONS IMPOSED
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ON NEWS REPORTING OF DISTURBANCES IN BASQUE PROVINCES "IN

RESPONSE TO UNANIMOUS OUTCRY" FROM LOCAL AND NATIONAL PRESS ASSOCIATIONS. ASKED ABOUT CONTINUING STATE OF EXCEPTION IN BASQUE PROVINCES, HERRERA REPLIED THAT IN HIS PERSONAL VIEW, UNLESS SOME CIRCUMSTANCES ARISE TO WARRANT IT, THREE-MONTH STATE OF EXCEPTION IMPOSED APRIL 25 WOULD NOT BE EXTENDED BEYOND JULY 25. COUNCIL OF MINISTERS ALSO DECIDED TO DECLARE SEVERAL AREAS IN VIZCAYA PRVINCE (BASQUE) AS DISASTER ZONE AS RESULT OF JUNE 12 TORRENTIAL RAINS.

3. HERRERA ALSO STATED THAT THERE WOULD BE NO EXCEPTIONAL ANNOUNCEMENT OR EVENTS JULY 18 (ANNIVERSARY OF FRANCO'S 1936 UPRISING) AND CONTRARY RUMORS WERE UNFOUNDED. THERE HAVE BEEN RUMORS THT FRANCO WOULD TURN OVER SOME POWERS TO PRINCE JUAN CARLOS OR MAKE HIM CAPTAIN GENERAL. MINISTER THEN ANNOUNCED THAT COUNCIL OF MINISTERS WOULD MEET JULY 16, 17, 23, 24 AND "PROBABLY AUGUST 21 AND 22 IN LA CORUNA (FRANCO'S CUSTOMARY SUMMER HOLIDAY HOME).

4. ASKED ABOUT OUTCOME OF SEVENTH ROUND OF BILATERAL TALKS WITH US, HERRERA REPLIED THAT UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES WAS SPAIN PREPARED TO ACCEPT RENEWAL OF AFC INVOLVING EXTENSION WITH MAJOR OR MINOR CHANGES. GOS, HE SAID, WAS NEGOTIATING NEW AGREEMENT BASED ON DOUBLE ASSUMPTION OF AGREEMENT'S RELEVANCE TO BILATERAL RELATIONS AND SPAIN'S PARTICIPATION IN WESTERN DEFENSE.

5. HERRERA TOLD PRESS REPS THAT HE HAD NOTED PRESS INTEREST IN SUBJECT OF FOUR-POWER TALKS JULY 9 BETWEEN SPAIN, MOROCCO, ALGERIA, AND MAURITANTIA. IF THIS EFFORT FAILED, HE SAID, THEN IT WOULD BE NECESSARY TO CALL FOR TALKS AMONG FOUR POWERS UNDER UN AEGIS.

6. COMMENT: PRESS ASSOCIATIONS HAVE INDEED BEEN VOCIFEROUS IN DEMANDING END TO CONTROLS ON REPORTING FROM BASEUE PROVINCES. WHAT IS SURPRISING IS THAT A MINISTER WOULD ACKNOWLEDGE THAT GOVERNMENT DECISION HAD BEEN MADE IN RESPONSE TO THIS PRESSURE GROUP. GOS HAS DECIDED, IT SEEMS, TO DEAL WITH BASQUE PROBLEM WITH POLITICAL MEASURES AS WELL AS REPRESSIVE ONEES. IN PAST SEVERAL WEEKS ARIAS NAVARRO HAS MET WITH PARLIAMENTRY LEADERS FROM BASEUE PROVINCES AND BISHOP ANOVEROS OF BILBAO WHILE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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FIRST VICE PRESIDENT AND MINISTER OF INTERIOR, GARCIA HERNANDEZ, HAD HELD SIMILR MEETINGS. INCIDENTS IN BASQUE PROVINCES HAVE DECREASED IN PAST SEVERAL WEEKS AND JULY 4 GOVERNMENT DCISIONS ARE CKLCULATED TO ENCOURAGE BASQUES TO AVOID ANY ACTION WHICH MIGHT COMPRIMISE POSSIBILITY FOR LAPSING OF STATE OF EXCEPTION JULY 25.
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